

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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R 201835Z OCT 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7926  
INFO USMISSION USNATO  
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AMCONSUL FLORENCE  
AMCONSUL GENOA  
AMCONSUL MILAN  
AMCONSUL NAPLES  
AMCONSUL PALERMO  
AMCONSUL TRIESTE POUCH  
AMCONSUL TURIN POUCH  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 17199

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: UNSETTLING INTERNAL MANEUVERING OPENS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT  
POLITICAL SEASON

SUMMARY: A FRENETIC OUTBURST OF OBSCURE FACTIONAL ACTIVITY  
HAS UNSETTLED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT POLITICS JUST PRIOR TO THE  
DC'S FIRST NATIONAL COUNCIL IN TEN MONTHS. WHAT ARE THE  
DC'S FACTIONAL LEADERS UP TO? IN THIS MESSAGE WE EXAMINE SOME  
OF THE IMPORTANT FUTURE EVENTS WHICH, TOGETHER WITH A GROWING  
MOOD OF UNCERTAINTY OVER THE FUTURE, MAY HAVE PROVIDED THE  
STIMULUS FOR THE CURRENT RESURGENCE OF INTERNAL PARTY  
MANEUVERING. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAVE WITNESSED A RESURGENCE IN THE  
BYZANTINE ACTIVITIES OF THE DC'S FACTIONAL LEADERS. THE  
POLITICAL SEASON WAS KICKED OFF AT A MEETING ORGANIZED BY  
DONAT-CATTIN'S FORZE NUOVE WING AT SAINT VINCENT TO WHICH  
ALL THE DC-LEFT FACTIONS WERE INVITED (ROME 14777).  
THERE HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN IMPORTANT CONVENTIONS OF  
THE LEFT-WING "BASE" FACTION AT BERGAMO AND OF THE MODERATE

"DOROTEI" AT MONTECATINI. THIS WEEK WILL SEE CONCLAVES OF FANFANIANI, ANDROTTIANI AND "THE FRIENDS" OF FORLANI. FACTIONAL LEADERS AFFIRM THAT THEY ARE CONTRIBUTING TO A HEALTHY INTERNAL DIALOGUE ON THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGY. OTHERS, SUCH AS REFORM LEADER CICCARDINI, COMPARE THEIR ACTIVITIES TO A / "SUICIDAL MONSTER" THAT WILL DEFEAT ITSELF IN THE END. THE INTENSE FACTIONAL ACTIVITY HAS STIRRED UP INTERNAL SQUABBLING IN THE PARTY. IT HAS PROVOKED ANDROTTI INTO PUBLICLY LAMENTING THE "EXCESSIVE" NUMBER OF FACTIONAL GATHERINGS WHICH HAS /OBSCURED" THE IMAGE OF THE DC'S UNITY. AND PARTY SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI HIMSELF ALSO RECENTLY SOUGHT TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN /CONSTRUCTIVE GATHERINGS" AND "DAMAGING MEETINGS PROMOTED WITH A DIVISIVE SPIRIT".

2. WHAT ARE THE DC'S FACTIONAL LEADERS UP TO? IN SHORT, THEY ARE DOING WHAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS DONE. AS MANIPULATORS OF INTERNAL POWER BLOCS, THEY ARE SEEKING TO MAINTAIN, AND IF AT ALL POSSIBLE TO INCREASE, THEIR CONTROL OVER SEGMENTS OF THE PARTY APPARATUS BOTH AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL. ALTHOUGH FACTIONAL DISCOURSE IS OFTEN CLOTHED IN IDEOLOGICAL OR POLICY TERMS, ISSUES OF PARTY STRATEGY CAN RARELY BE DIVORCED FROM PROBLEMS OF POWER--CONTROL OVER THE RUNNING OF THE PARTY. FACTIONAL MANUEVERING HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN MOST ACTIVE DURING PERIODS OF RELATIVE PARTY AND

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GOVERNMENT STABILITY. IN TIMES OF CRISIS, DC LEADERS CLOSE RANKS. AT PRESENT, THE RELATIVE STABILITY OFFERED BY THE ANDROTTI GOVERNMENT, AT LEAST OVER THE SHORT TERM, ENABLES THE FACTIONS TO JOCKEY FOR INTERNAL ADVANTAGE.

3. A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT FUTURE EVENTS, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, COUPLED WITH GROWING SENSE OF UNCERTAINTY OVER THE FUTURE, APPEAR TO BE PROVIDING THE STIMULUS FOR THE RECENT RESURGENCE OF FACTIONAL ACTIVITY. THE MOST IMMEDIATE IS THE LONG-DELAYED MEETING OF THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 21-23, THE FIRST GATHERING OF THE "DC PARLIAMENT" SINCE DECEMBER 1976. THE SESSION WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A FULL-SCALE POLICY DEBATE (ZACCAGNINI WILL DELIVER THE MAIN ADDRESS). THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO CONSIDER PROPOSED REFORMS OF THE PARTY STATUTE WHICH, IF PASSED, COULD DRASTICALLY WEAKEN THE POWER OF THE PARTY FACTIONS. THE MOST IMPORTANT PROPOSED REFORM WOULD LIMIT CONTROL OVER PARTY MEMBERSHIP FROM LOCAL, FACTIONAL-BOSS CONTROL. IF A NEW PARTY STATUTE IS PASSED, THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE IS EXPECTED TO RESIGN IN ORDER TO PERMIT

THE ELECTION OF A NEW EXECUTIVE "GIUNTA" ON THE NEW  
REFORM CRITERIA. THIS, IN ITSELF, IS OF SUFFICIENT  
CONCERN TO THE DC'S FACTIOS TO ACCOUNT FOR MUCH OF  
THE RECENT, FRANTIC MANEUVERING.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 17199

DIRECTORATE IS EXPECTED TO RESIGN IN ORDER TO PERMIT THE ELECTION OF  
A NEW EXECUTIVE "GIUNTA" ON THE NEW  
REFORM CRITERIA. THIS IN ITSELF, IS OF SUFFICIENT  
CONERN TO THE DC'S FACTIONS TO ACCOUNT FOR MUCH OF  
THE RECENT, FRANTIC MANEUVERING.

4. IN ADDITION, THE DC LEADERS WILL HAVE TO DECIDE  
AT SOME POINT WHETHER TO HOLD THE NEXT NATIONAL PARTY  
CONGRESS ON SCHEDULE IN ARCH 1978. THIS COULD INVOLVE  
A MAJOR RESHUFFLING IN DC FACTIONAL LINEUPS. MANY  
WELL-INFOMRED DC SOURCES FOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT THE  
CONGRESS WILL BE HELD ON SCHEDULE. THEY POINT TO  
THE DIFFICULTY OF HOLDING A POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE  
CONGRESS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THIS SPRING'S IMPORTATNT  
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ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS. COMBINING THE ELECTORAL CONTESTS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER, THE MAY OR JUNE POLL WILL BE REGARDED AS AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL REFERENDUM, INVOLVING NEARLY THIRTY PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ELECTORATE. THE INCREASED LIKELIHOOD THAT THE CONGRESS WILL BE DELAYED UNTIL 1979 HAS REOPENED THE LONG-FESTERING QUESTION AS TO WHETHER ZACCAGNINI SHOULD OR WILL STEP DOWN AS PARTY SECRETARY. ALTHOUGH ZACCAGNINI'S POSITION WAS RECENTLY STRENGTHENED BY AN IMPRESSIVE DEMONSTRATION OF HIS CONTINUING APPEAL TO YOUTH AND THE DC BASE AT THE DC FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL AT PALMONOVA, MANY OBSERVERS EXPECT ZACCAGNINI, WIDELY CRITICIZED WITHIN THE PARTY FOR HIS LEADERSHIP WEAKNESSES, TO RESIGN UPON COMPLETION OF HIS TERM IN MARCH, CITING ILL HEALTH. THIS POSSIBILITY HAS PROMPTED THE MODERATE DOROTEI TO ATTEMPT TO HEAD OFF A POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT OF ZACCAGNINI BY DEPUTY SECRETARY GALLONI, WHO IS MISTRUSTED BY THE DC'S CENTER AND CENTER-RIGHT WINGS. WHILE MANY BELIEVE THAT MORO IS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED ZACCAGNINI--SHOULD HE RESIGN, FORLANI HAS APPARENTLY CHOSEN THE PRESENT MOMENT TO RE-ENTER THE FRAY OF DC POLITICS AND ADVANCE HIS CANDIDACY.

5. FINALLY, ANOTHER EVENT LOOMS LARGE IN THE CALCULATIONS OF THE DC'S POLITICAL LEADERS. ON JUNE 24, THE SIX-MONTH "WHITE PERIOD" WILL BEGIN, SIGNALING THE COMMENCEMENT IN EARNEST OF THE INTER AND INTRA-PARTY MANEUVERINGS FOR THE ELECTION IN DECEMBER OF A SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT LEONE. AS THE MONTHS APPROACH THE DATE ON WHICH PRESIDENT LEONE WILL NO LONGER BE CONSTITUTIONALLY EMPOWERED TO DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT AND CALL NEW POLITICAL ELECTIONS, ADDITIONAL UNCERTAINTIES

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AND FEARS WILL INEVITABLY BE INTRODUCED IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL EQUATION. UNTIL THAT TIME, WHEN ANDROTTI'S GOVERNMENT WILL BE ESSENTIALLY IMMUNIZED AGAINST COLLAPSE, THE ATMOSPHERE CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN TENSE. THROUGHOUT THIS POLITICALLY DETERMINATIVE PHASE, THE ROAD WILL BE BUMPY AND PITTED; DETOURS AND WASHOUTS CAN BE EXPECTED. IN PREPARATION FOR THE UNKNOWN, THE DC FACTIONS APPEAR TO BE OVERHAULING AND TUNING UP THEIR VEHICLES. GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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